Middlebury

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Friends of International Students (FIS) Host Program Newsletter

Fall 2016 - A Note from ISSS; Important Dates; Upcoming Events; FIS Story Corner

A Note from ISSS

Hello from ISSS! The fall semester is in full swing and the ISSS team has been very busy helping our international students settle into their new home. Many wonderful families in Middlebury and the surrounding communities eagerly awaited their arrival to welcome them into their hearts and homes.

On Saturday, October 8, ISSS held its annual matching event for the Friends of International Students (FIS) Host Program in McCardell Bicentennial Hall. The event kicked off the 16th year of the FIS program and the end of an involved matching process that began last spring. In total, 36 students and 36 host families met each other for the first time (either during the event or shortly thereafter) and enjoyed local cider and donuts, and great conversation. Many hosts expressed that their student was a "perfect match" for them which was music to our ears!

Overall, more than a hundred participants took their first steps toward what we hope will blossom into life-long friendships. We had great variety among students and host families– the students were a combination of first years, exchange students and a few upperclassmen, while our new and veteran hosts consisted of community members, Middlebury alumni, as well as current and former employees of the College.

We want to thank everyone involved – students, hosts and volunteers – for making this a truly memorable event.

February Student Hosts

We are in need of more hosts, particularly those without pets, for February 2017 students as well as first year students who recently expressed an interest in the program. If you or someone you know would be interested in hosting one of these students, please contact the ISSS office at **isss@middlebury.edu (subject line: FIS Host Program)** or at **(802) 443-5858**.

Important Dates

Thanksgiving Break –Thanksgiving recess begins on Tuesday, November 22, at 4:15 p.m. and runs through Sunday, November 27. Some students will leave campus. Due to the brevity of the break, many students choose to stay on campus during this time. If they choose to remain here, they must register through Self-Service Banner (our student information system) to have access to their residence hall. We have found that it is a great time for host students and their families to connect. The students who remain on campus will be allowed to stay in their rooms, although Dining Services will be closed for the break. The last meal served in the dining halls will be breakfast on Wednesday, November 23, in Proctor Dining. Dining Services will serve a Thanksgiving Meal on Thursday, November 24, in Atwater Dining Hall from 12-2 p.m. This meal is **free** for students staying on campus and faculty and staff who are working that day. For other College guests, faculty and staff, tickets can be purchased for $5.00 per person from the Box Office in the McCullough Student Center or at: **http://boxoffice.middlebury.edu/.** (Ticket sales will end on Monday, November 21.)The first meal after the break will be dinner on Sunday, November 27, in Ross and Proctor Dining Halls. Then, Atwater Dining Hall will re-open for breakfast and classes will resume on Monday, November 28.

Final Exams – The final exam period begins on Tuesday, December 13, and ends on Sunday, December 18. Students have varying exam schedules, including take-home exams and term papers depending on their courses. Exams may be scheduled during the day or the evening. The exam period is always a hectic and stressful time so you may want to ask your student about his or her exam schedule. A care package, a message of encouragement, or even a coffee or tea break with you is much appreciated and can help alleviate stress and lift your student's spirits!

Winter Break – The winter break begins on Monday, December 19, and runs through Sunday, January 8. Winter term classes begin on Monday, January 9. Most students leave campus for the 3 –week vacation. The College officially closes for the break with almost all offices being closed during that time. Students who do not have an alternative option may request permission to stay on campus for all or part of the break from their Commons Dean. The application will be available from Tuesday, November 1 until Wednesday, November 16 on the Residential Life website at: http://www.middlebury.edu/student-life/community-living/residential-life/moving-in-and-out/Recess/Closed_Break. Only those who are approved are allowed to remain on campus. Some first-year students may be worried about what they will do during the break. It may be worth having a conversation with them about their plans to help brainstorm ideas and/or to encourage them to request permission to stay, if necessary. Dining services will be closed after breakfast on Monday, December 19, and will re-open for brunch on Sunday, January 8. Students staying on campus during break will have access to kitchens, but must provide their own food. The College provides a few informal group meals for those approved to stay. The winter break is a very quiet, and sometimes lonely, time for students who remain on campus so this is a great time to invite your student to share a holiday meal or offer to take them grocery shopping with you.

Break Travel – Many students may be seeking rides to and from the airport. Providing transportation for your student is completely voluntary so please do not feel obligated to do so. The Student Government Association (SGA) is providing discounted bus services to and from the airport in Burlington ($15 each way) and to some of the major metropolitan areas around the November and December breaks. Students can purchase tickets through the College Box Office or at: http://boxoffice.middlebury.edu/. You may also direct your student to the following link for alternate transportation options: http://www.middlebury.edu/sustainability/transportation.

If you happen to be going to Burlington during the November or December break times, you may want to bring your student along for the ride so they have an opportunity to do some shopping or sightseeing of their own.

January Term–Residence Halls open at 9 a.m. on Saturday, January 7. Winter Term classes run from Monday, January 9 until Friday, February 3. Students take one course during the winter term, so they may have more time available for activities with their hosts. If your schedule allows, this is another great time to connect with your student for fun in the snow or some hot cocoa and a movie or board game.

Upcoming Events

Hirschfield International Film Series
Foreign and independent films, screened on Saturdays at 3:00 and 8:00 p.m. in Dana Auditorium. Free and open to the public. http://www.middlebury.edu/academics/fmmc/hirschfield/2016-2017

Middlebury College Choir
Sunday, November 6, 3 p.m., Mahaney Center for the Arts, Robison Hall
A repertoire that will feature folk music, world music, American music and more. Free and open to the public. http://www.middlebury.edu/academics/music

Middlebury African Music and Dance Ensemble
Tuesday, November 15, 8 p.m., Mahaney Center for the Arts, Robison Hall
A performance by a student ensemble that explores the cultural, social, political and religious traditions of Africa. Free and open to the public. http://www.middlebury.edu/academics/music

ISO Cultural Show: Saturday, December 3 – Save the date for this celebration of all cultures! The International Students' Organization (ISO) Cultural Show is one of the most anticipated shows of the year, featuring singing, dancing, poetry and more. There will be a family-friendly showcase from 5:30-6:30 p.m., and a complete show from 8:00-10:30 p.m. on the stage of McCullough Wilson Hall. Tickets will go on sale November 7, 2016 at 6 a.m. at the Middlebury College Box Office in McCullough Student Center, on their website at: http://boxoffice.middlebury.edu/, or by phone at (802) 443-6433.

Find other exhibitions, performances and events at the College and in our local area by clicking on the following links:

- **The College Calendar**: http://www.middlebury.edu/events
- **Middlebury College Museum of Art**: http://museum.middlebury.edu/
- **Addison County Chamber of Commerce:** https://www.addisoncounty.com
- **Burlington happenings**: http://www.sevendaysvt.com/

FIS Story Corner

The FIS Story Corner is a chance to share the adventures you have with your students in words and/or pictures and articles that would be of interest to the FIS Community. Please send your submissions to us at: isss@middlebury.edu so we can proudly share them here!

One of our long-time hosts, Wendy Goodwin, recommended a TED talk entitled, "Don't ask where I'm from, ask where I'm a local". You can find it at: http://www.ted.com/talks/taiye_selasi_don_t_ask_where_i_m_from_ask_where_i_m_a_local .

Susan Polk and Glen Wehrwein enjoyed a hike up Snake Mountain with their exchange student, Machi Niiya '20, and shared this beautiful photo with us.

Carolyn and Paul Dahm had the wonderful opportunity to spend time with Anne and David Edwards, parents of their student, Sarah '20, during their visit from England.

And here are more pictures from our October 8 Matching Event at Bicentennial Hall. Enjoy!

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Best wishes to you and your family this holiday season

ISSS Staff

Kathy Foley	Associate Dean and Director of ISSS
Kas Singh	International Student and Scholar Advisor
Joani Taylor	International Student and Scholar Advisor
Carolyn Dahm	ISSS Administrative Coordinator
Kirsten McNeill '18	Office Assistant